



Roxann Wedegartner
Mayor

City of
GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

City Hall • 14 Court Square • Greenfield, MA 01301
Phone 413-772-1548 ext 3 • Fax 413-772-1309
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John Griffin, Chair
Rachel Lindsay, Vice Chair
Erika LaForme
Fletcher Harrington
Travis Drury

Agent: Cassie Tragert

GREENFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes of Tuesday, March 23rd, 2021
Greenfield Department of Planning and Development
Online Through Zoom
Greenfield MA 01301

The meeting was called to order by John Griffin at 6:31 PM with the following members:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

John Griffin
Rachel Lindsay
Erika LaForme
Travis Drury

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Fletcher Harrington (With Notice)

ALSO PRESENT:

Cassie Tragert (Agent)
Christin McDonough (Alternate Member)
Mark Stinson (DEP Circuit Rider)
Anthony Wonseski (SVE Associates)
Dwight Merriman (Big Y Foods)
Rachel Loeffler (Berkshire Design Group)

Note on Meeting Access in light of COVID-19 State of Emergency:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Greenfield Conservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found below. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the City of Greenfield website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Should any technical interruption to the meeting occur and the meeting is suddenly ended, it will not be resumed and all items will be automatically continued to the next scheduled meeting date. Contact the Conservation Agent for more information



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6:31 PM Administrative Matters: Approval of Meeting Minutes from 3/9/2021

Changes included correcting the date listed.

Motion made by Erika LaForme to approve the minutes for the March 9th, 2021 meetings as amended.

Motion seconded by Travis Drury.

No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries

6:36 PM Public Meetings/Hearings

➤ **Public Hearing: Notice of Intent: Slope Stability at Rear Linwood Street associated with Franklin County Fairgrounds; (Map: 33, Lot: 16C) DEP File # Not Yet Obtained.**

Agent Tragert informed the Commission that the applicant is generating a revised final plan for submission and so is requesting a continuance of the hearing to April 13th.

➤ **Public Hearing: Notice of Intent: Tree removal, invasive plant removal, and restoration planting at 225-245 Mohawk Trail ; (Map: 44 Lot: 4) DEP File #: 168-0339**

Anthony Wonseski Jr. P.E. of SVE Associates presented the proposed plan to cut approximately six (6) mature trees and leave stumps along a short segment of Wheeler Brook abutting the above-mentioned property and the Mohawk Trail property. Invasive plant eradication will also be performed to be replaced with lower growing native shrubbery. Impacts to resource areas include 11,616 square feet of 200ft River Front Area with 3,500 square feet of that disturbance within 100ft of the brook. Wonseski also added that Spring Valley Landscaping would likely be used for the project. Herbicide application will be the primary method for invasive removal, though hand pulling will be utilized where possible. For the long-term maintenance beyond the first 2 years after completion, Big Y Foods, Inc. will be responsible for the maintenance of the areas and does not anticipate leaving the location for many years. The goal of the project is to increase visibility of the existing sign for Big Y Foods and to manage invasive species within the area.

Commissioner Lindsay requested clarification on the species of the existing trees and their size. Wonseski explained that they range in size between 4 inches and 20 inches in diameter. The species include poplar, locust, honey suckle, and oak.

Commissioner Drury requested clarification on the plans for the grassy area near the existing stormwater structure and whether additional plantings would be feasible. Wonseski explained that that area is the berm for the existing bioretention area associated with the lots stormwater management system. There is concern that tree plantings could impair the function of the berm/bioretention area over time and so the plan limits plantings to the toe of the bank. Commission Drury also asked if there may be future plans to remove trees at the other side of the entrance to increase visibility for traffic coming from the other direction. Wonseski



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explained that that is unlikely as the majority of traffic to the store comes from I-91 so there isn't as much of a need.

Commissioner Lindsay asked if alternatives to herbicide usage had been considered and the feasibility of other methods such as hand pulling. Wonseski explained that alternatives had been considered, but there is concern that hand pulling could cause more erosion in the process. There is literature to support the herbicide method proposed. Commissioner Lindsay requested more information on the herbicide to be used and methods of application. Wonseski explained that there is a spec sheet available for the herbicide that he can provide to the Commission and that specific herbicide has been graded as acceptable for use within and in close proximity to water.

Commissioner Drury questioned the likelihood of invasive species traveling to this proposed management area from upstream and how they will be prevented from infiltrating the area. Wonseski explained that it is likely that invasives could travel to this proposed area and that it will continued maintenance by Big Y will be key to successful prevention of future invasive plants. Dwight Merriman of Big Y Foods, Inc also added that Big Y is committed to maintaining that area as they plan to expand within the lot as a business and so they and all the other business within the lot have a vested interest in the success of this area to ensure the sign remains visible as well as general aesthetics of the area. He added that Spring Valley Landscaping has been working with Big Y for over 15 years and so they have a strong working relationship.

Commission Lindsay asked if the existing sign could be relocated or changed to avoid the need for this project. Dwight Merriman explained that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) owns the area and has historically not allowed any movement of the pylon. There is a possibility that changes to the sign could be made in the future, but the current understanding is that the placement of the sign cannot be moved.

Commissioner Drury asked whether it would be feasible to do invasive plant management to the west of the entrance areas even though the blockage of the sign isn't an issue from that direction, just to prevent some invasive spread in general. Wonseski explained that they only plan to work within an area that extends in front of the area of the business and that extending to the west would be significantly outside the originally proposed scope.

The property lines were reviewed and Agent Tragert requested clarification on the administrative implications of this permitting since part of the area is within MassDOT property. Wonseski clarified that they have been in communication with MassDOT and they instructed them to get clearance from the Conservation Commission before giving formal permission to access the area.

Commissioner Lindsay asked if a more detailed assessment of the addition of more tree plantings could fit to the north east of the main work area. Wonseski agreed that at least one tree may be possible and he could explore this, though it's not a large area so he is unsure at this time. Agent Tragert suggested potentially



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donating trees to another project in the future in lieu of tree replacement in this area. Wonseski said that could be considered.

Commissioner Lindsay questioned whether the benefit of invasive plant removal would be offset by the use of herbicide considering the small size of the area to be managed. She requested information from Spring Valley Landscaping on what herbicide free options they may have available and that the plan be updated to reflect any possible additional plantings as previously discussed.

Wonseski requested a continuance to the April 13th Conservation Commission meeting to accommodate this request. Commissioner Griffin confirmed.

Agent Tragert Requested that Project Monitoring & Site Visit Scheduling for 739 Bernardston Road – Center School be taken out of agenda order to accommodate those in attendance.

7:30 PM Project Monitoring & Site Visit Scheduling

- List of active Order of Conditions and updates.
 - 739 Bernardston Road – Center School.
 - Wetlands Replication Update: Rachel Loeffler of Berkshire Design Group presented the latest wetland replication plan which included microtopography data and soil composition. A layer of clay along the bottom of the area is planned to help with wet retention to maintain wetland conditions which Site Monitor Ward Smith recommends and has utilized before. On site soils were intended to be stockpiled and reused, but that did not occur. However, the original soil composition is known and will be replicated, preference will be given to onsite soils if possible. Ward Smith will continue to monitor the area throughout construction and after completion. He has been made aware of the Order conditions requiring that the DEP replication checklist be used for monthly reporting and it was determined that it would be appropriate to include the replication reporting with the regular monthly reporting. DEP Circuit Rider, Mark Stinson, noted that approval for this plan for the replication area is not required as it is written in the Order of Conditions.
 - Proposed changes to the originally approved plan were briefly discussed, however it was determined that a formal proposal needs to be submitted to the Commission as well as DEP before discussion on whether an Amended Order of Condition is appropriate to pursue or a new Notice of Intent will be required.

8:20 PM Enforcement Updates & Other Business

- Enforcement updates
 - 21 Spring Terrace (Map 65-9) – unauthorized construction within Riverfront Area.
 - No updates, awaiting review of plantings in the spring.
 - 286 Plain Road (Map R34-10) – unauthorized construction within Riverfront Area.
 - No updates.



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- 637 Colrain Road (Map R35-7) – unauthorized filling of wetlands.
 - No updates.
 - Old Wedgewood Gardens - Kimball Drive (Map 48-24) – unauthorized fill of Riverfront Area.
 - No updates.
 - 8 Conway Drive (Map 49-24) – unauthorized fill of Riverfront Area.
 - No updates.
- 1 Birch Street and City ROW Tree Removal – It was determined that an Emergency Certification would be appropriate for the cutting of the trees within the City Right-of-Way and that further review of the trees proposed to be cut within the 1 Birch Street property is needed.

Motion made by Rachel Lindsay to authorize Agent Tragert to issue an Emergency Certification for the cutting of **hazard trees within the City Right-of-Way near 1 Birch Street by the City Department of Public Works.**

Motion Seconded by Erika LaForme.

No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries

- Invasive Species Volunteer Group Proposition – Agent Tragert reviewed the preliminary proposal by a group of volunteers unaffiliated with any formal group to organize an effort to remove invasive plant species within the Green River Conservation Area. Agent Tragert explained that she had informed the group of what would likely be required for a formal submittal of such a request.
- City Ordinance Review – Agent Tragert presented a shared document for the Commissioners to review and potentially add to for possible changes to the City Wetlands Ordinance as well as resource to compare other city's existing bylaws/ordinances.

8:40 PM Project Monitoring & Site Visit Scheduling (Continued)

- List of active Order of Conditions and updates.
- 195 Mill Brook Road – Solar Project.
 - No updates.
 - 125 Mohawk Trail – Hotel Construction.
 - No updates.
 - 60 James Street – Single-family home.
 - No updates.
 - Wisdom Way/River Street/Mill Street Intersection (DEP #: 168-0338, Exp. 10/27/2023) – Roadway improvements.
 - No updates.



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➤ **Set Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 13th, 2021**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:45 PM

Motion made by John Griffin to adjourn at 8:45 PM

Motion seconded by Erika LaForme

No further discussion – 4-0-0 – Motion Carries

Respectfully Submitted,

Cassie Tragert,
Conservation Agent

John Griffin,
Chair